

### ORIGINAL COMPLAINT AND DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

- 1. Plaintiff David Morgan is an individual with a disability. Plaintiff brings this action pursuant to Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA"), 42 U.S.C. § 12101 *et seq* and the Tex. Hum. Res. Code § 121.001 *et seq*. This Complaint seeks redress for past and continuing discrimination against persons with disabilities and to bring the premises into compliance with the ADAAG¹. This discrimination is occurring at the shopping plaza at the north west corner of Collins and Pioneer Parkway in Arlington (the "Center"). The Center is platted as several separate pieces of property though on the ground the Center appears to share its parking amongst the platted pieces and no person visiting or trying to use the Center would know or care that it is broken up in the platting.
- 2. Plaintiff seeks to enjoin the Defendants from maintaining and to require that the Defendants remove the architectural barriers that interfere with Plaintiff's right to the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations

3. Plaintiff also seeks a permanent injunction to prevent the Defendants from engaging in these unlawful practices, as well as declaratory relief and attorney's fees and costs of litigation.

### **JURISDICTION**

4. This Court has jurisdiction over the federal claims brought in this action under 28 U.S.C. §1331 and 42 U.S.C. §12188 and supplemental jurisdiction over any state claims pertaining to this discrimination under 28 U.S.C. §1367.

### **PARTIES**

- 5. Plaintiff David Morgan is an individual with a disability within the meaning of the ADA Sec. 3(2)(A), 42 U.S.C. 12102(2)(A)), and a "Person with a disability" as defined by Tex. Hum. Res. Code § 121.002(4). He uses a wheelchair for mobility.
- 6. Defendant, Pioneer Parkway Ltd. is a Texas Limited Partnership doing business in Texas. Pioneer Parkway Ltd. owns part of the Shopping Center in this case. The general partner of Pioneer Parkway Ltd. is Ginco Investment Company. Ginco is also the agent for service of process for Pioneer Parkway Ltd. and can be reached at 2808 Fairmount, Ste. 110, Dallas, Texas 75201. The agent for service on Ginco Investment Company is Donald Goldman and he can be served with notice at the same address, or wherever he may be found.
- 7. Defendant Hho United Group, Inc. is a Texas corporation doing business in Texas.

  Hho United Group, Inc. owns part of the Center. It can be served by serving Ninaya Qaddura

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Federal ADA Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities, 28 CFR Part 36, Appendix A, (the "ADAAG").

Case 4:11-cv-00890- Document 1 Filed 12/27/11 Page 3 of 14 PageID 3 at 13434 Floyd Circle, Dallas, Texas 75243, or wherever he may be found. All of the Defendant's together are herein collectively referred to as the Landlords.

8. The Landlords own the real property where the Center is located. The Landlords presumably "lease to" the tenants who then own or operate the businesses within the Center. There are numerous different businesses located at the Center such as Halal Import Food Market, Al Hamara Restaurant, Wash World, Bingo Bucks, Speedy Cash and Pho Palace to mention just a few. Each of these businesses, as tenants, are also jointly and severally responsible for the access into their premises under the ADA. The Center has its own parking and is generally located at the corner of Pioneer Parkway and Collins in Arlington, Texas and more particularly described in Tarrant County records as Southmoor Addition Blk Lot 4B1 and Southmoor Addition Blk Lot 4B1A (both owned by Pioneer Parkway Ltd. with a combined value of approximately \$1,900,000.00) and Southmoor Addition Blk Lot 4A (owned by Hho United Group, Inc. valued at approximately \$1,700,000.00) Together all of the real property is referred to as the Center and has a value in excess of three and a half million dollars, (\$3,500,000.00).

#### BACKGROUND

- 9. Almost 20 years ago Congress determined that disabled people, such as the Plaintiff, were being discriminated against by businesses, such as the Center. Specifically Congress found *inter alia* the following:
- (a) some 43,000,000 Americans have one or more physical or mental disabilities, and this number is increasing as the population as a whole is growing older;
- (b) historically, society has tended to isolate and segregate individuals with disabilities, and, despite some improvements, such forms of discrimination against individuals with disabilities continue to be a serious and pervasive social problem;

- (c) discrimination against individuals with disabilities persists in such critical areas as employment, housing, public accommodations, education, transportation, communication, recreation, institutionalization, health services, voting, and access to public services;
- (d) unlike individuals who have experienced discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, or age, individuals who have experienced discrimination on the basis of disability have often had no legal recourse to redress such discrimination;
- (e) individuals with disabilities continually encounter various forms of discrimination, including outright intentional exclusion, the discriminatory effects of architectural, transportation, and communication barriers, overprotective rules and policies, failure to make modifications to existing facilities and practices, exclusionary qualification standards and criteria, segregation, and relegation to lesser services, programs, activities, benefits, jobs, or other opportunities; 42 U.S.C. 12101(a).
- 10. As a result of these findings the Congress passed the Americans with Disabilities Act (the "ADA"), 42 U.S.C. Sec. 12101 et seq. That act forms the basis for this action. The ADA was designed to do several things, specifically among other things:
- (a) to provide a clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities;
- (b) to provide clear, strong, consistent, enforceable standards addressing discrimination against individuals with disabilities; 42 U.S.C. 12101(b). As a result of Mr. Morgan's disability using many public accommodations is difficult. The Center, by failing to come into compliance with the law continues the discriminatory effects that the law sought to reform.
- 11. As a result of Mr. Morgan's disability, using many public accommodations is already difficult. The Defendants, by failing to comply with the law, continue the discriminatory effects that the law sought to reform. Under the law, both the landlord who owns the building and the tenants who own or operate the places of public accommodation are liable for the violations of the ADA alleged herein. As between those parties, allocation of responsibility for complying with the obligations of the ADA may be determined by lease or other contract. <sup>2</sup> 36 C.F.R. 201 (b).

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12. Congress provided that the primary enforcement mechanism for the ADA would be private citizens, like Mr. Morgan. Private citizens have been given the right to file suit to enforce this civil rights law to assure access to the public accommodations in the United States. Mr. Morgan, through this suit, seeks to enforce that right. The Center is completely under the control of the Defendants. Therefore the existence of the barriers is the responsibility of the Defendants in this case. The Plaintiff has no control of the Center or the fact that he is disabled. The existence and requirements of the ADA are well known and should come as no surprise to any entity operating a business or owning commercial property. At anytime prior to this filing the Defendants could have modified the Center or their portion of the Center to come into compliance and thereby avoided this lawsuit entirely. One of the defendants has had more than 10 years. The other defendant has had more than 17 years to do so. Neither chose to make the necessary modifications to come into compliance and thereby avoid suit.

#### **FACTS**

- 13. Mr. Morgan uses a wheelchair to get around. Mr. Morgan lives in Arlington. He has visited the Center on several occasions.
- 14. The Center is a large open air shopping center or "strip center". It has its own parking. The Center has many architectural barriers. First of all there is no accessible route to any of the businesses from the public sidewalk almost 20 years after passage of the ADA. Much of the "accessible parking" is not accessible. There are excessive slopes in many of the parking spaces and access aisles. Many of the curb ramps are not accessible. There are

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The Tenants have not been formally joined yet in an effort to try and resolve this case without that additional

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actually stairs on the "accessible" route between different businesses at the Center. There are not enough accessible parking spaces allocated at the Center. By the Halal Import Store the accessible parking aisle is located in the same place that the shopping carts are kept. It is in a metal enclosed area, rendering the access aisle useless. Either the access aisle was placed in this cart retaining area, or the cart retaining area was placed in the access aisle. Either way the condition is inexcusable and a clear violation of both State and Federal law. There is no reasonable explanation for why the carts would be kept in the access aisle.

- 15. This is not a complete list of the barriers at the Center. A complete list will be provided to the Defendants after discovery is conducted. This listing is merely intended to provide the Defendants with information sufficient to conform to the notice pleading requirements. The Center has not been brought into compliance with the requirements of the ADA over the last 18 years. It was readily achievable for each of the defendants to have removed at least one or more of the architectural barriers at the Center over the last 10 years.
- 16. Upon each visit Mr. Morgan will encounter some of the above listed architectural barriers at the Center. Despite those barriers he will continue to try and use the Center as best as he can.
- 17. The barriers located at the Center discriminate against him with regards to using the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, and accommodations located at the Center as required by the law.
- 18. As a result of the Defendants' conduct and in order to pursue this matter Plaintiff retained counsel with more than 22 years of experience, including having been appointed class counsel on several occasions to represent mobility impaired individuals of Texas in just

complication.

this type of case. The Plaintiff has agreed to pay his attorneys a reasonable fee. Pursuant to his statutory rights, Mr. Morgan will seek to recover his fees and any costs in this litigation from the Defendants if he is the prevailing party in this case.

## CAUSES OF ACTION Count 1

### ADA - Failure to Accommodate When Removal was Readily Achievable

- 19. The law requires that "[n] o individual shall be discriminated against on the basis of a disability in the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations of any place of public accommodation by any person who owns, leases (or leases to), or operates a place of public accommodation". 42 U.S.C. §12182(a) (italics added).
- 20. A facility means all *or any portion of buildings*, structures, sites, complexes, equipment, rolling stock or other conveyances, roads, walks, passageways, parking lots, or other real or personal property, including the site where the building, property, structure, or equipment is located. 28 CFR part 36.104 Definitions (italics added).
- 21. The Center and the business in it are public accommodations.
- 22. The ADA places an ongoing obligation on all public accommodations to remove architectural barriers from existing facilities and public accommodations if that removal is readily achievable.

Readily achievable means easily accomplishable and able to be carried out without much difficulty or expense. In determining whether an action is readily achievable factors to be considered include --

(1) The nature and cost of the action needed under this part;

(2) The overall financial resources of the site or sites involved in the action; the number of persons employed at the site; the effect on expenses and resources; legitimate safety requirements that are necessary for safe operation, including crime prevention measures; or the impact otherwise of the action upon the operation of the site:

28 CFR part 36.104 Definitions

- 23. The Center has an overall value of more than \$3,500,000.00 dollars. The Defendants, like the owners or operators of all public accommodations, have known or should have known about the obligation to make alterations to provide access into the Center. One of the Landlord has owned the Center for more than 25 years, the other has owned it more than 10. Over the last 10 years, it has been readily achievable for the Defendants to have removed some, one, or more of the barriers set out earlier in the "Facts" portion of this Complaint, or other barriers at the Center, but they have not done so.
- 24. The Justice Department has set out the priorities for barrier removal. Specifically the Justice Department has determined as follows:
  - (c) Priorities. A public accommodation is urged to take measures to comply with the barrier removal requirements of this section in accordance with the following order of priorities.
  - (1) First, a public accommodation should take measures to provide access to a place of public accommodation from public sidewalks, parking, or public transportation. These measures include, for example, installing an entrance ramp, widening entrances, and providing accessible parking spaces.
  - 28 CFR part 36.304(c) (emphasis added)
- 25. The barriers that exist at the Center include non-compliant accessible parking, no accessible route through the facility, and no accessible route from public sidewalks to the front door. 18 years after this law went into effect this Center is operating with the exact

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- 26. The Defendants discriminate against Plaintiff on the basis of a disability in the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, and/or accommodations at the Center in that the Defendants do not afford to Plaintiff or any other mobility impaired individual the full and equal use and or enjoyment of or access to the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, and accommodations available at the Center as required by law because the Defendants have failed to remove those barriers where the removal was readily achievable.
- 27. As a direct and proximate result of the Defendants' denial of appropriate and dignified access into and use of the Center, the Defendants deprive the Plaintiff of his civil liberties and thereby discriminate against him.

# Count 2 ADA - Improper Alterations

- 28. 36 C.F.R. 406 provides that, "(a) New construction <u>and alterations</u> subject to this part shall comply with the standards for accessible design published as appendix A to this part (ADAAG)." (emphasis added) As such the law requires that alterations be built in compliance with the ADAAG new construction standards.
  - (a) General. (1) Any alteration to a place of public accommodation or a commercial facility, after January 26, 1992, shall be made so as to ensure that, to the maximum extent feasible, the altered portions of the facility are readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities, including individuals who use wheelchairs.

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- (2) An alteration is deemed to be undertaken after January 26, 1992, if the physical alteration of the property begins after that date.
- (b) Alteration. For the purposes of this part, an alteration is a change to a place of public accommodation or a commercial facility that affects or could affect the usability of the building or facility or any part thereof.

28 C.F.R. 36.402

- 29. The facts in this Complaint set out and describe numerous features at the Center that "affect or could affect the usability of the building or facility or any part thereof." Some of the barriers, upon information and belief, were modified after the date of construction and after the date for "modifications" under the ADA. Until discovery is conducted, the Plaintiff cannot know exactly when any possible modifications were completed. The Plaintiff suspects that the barriers to the access aisle by the Halal Import store, along with some of the parking spaces and curb cuts to inaccessible parking are modifications. When modifications affecting the usability of the Center are designed and constructed after the requirements of the ADA went into effect those modifications must comply with the ADAAG for new construction.
- 30. The Defendants discriminate against Plaintiff on the basis of a disability in the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, and/or accommodations at the Center in that, the Defendants do not afford to Plaintiff or any other mobility impaired individual the full and equal use and or enjoyment of or access to the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, and accommodations available at the Center as required by law because they have failed to ensure that the alterations or modifications made after January 26, 1992 are accessible to the maximum extent feasible.
- 31. As a direct and proximate result of the Defendants' denial of appropriate and

Case 4:11-cv-00890-Y Document 1 Filed 12/27/11 Page 11 of 14 PageID 11 dignified access into and use of the Center, the Defendants have deprived Plaintiff of his civil liberties and thereby discriminated against him.

## Count 3 Tex. Hum. Res. Code – Discrimination

- 32. Tex. Hum. Res. Code § 121.003(a) provides that persons who are physically disabled have the same right as the able-bodied to the full use and enjoyment of any public facility in the state.
- 33. TEX GOV CODE §469.003 (Vernon 2003) defines one set of public facilities covered by the law, specifically, "a privately funded building or facility defined as a "public accommodation" by Section 301(7) of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. Section 12181), and its subsequent amendments, that is constructed or renovated, modified, or altered on or after January 1, 1992" (emphasis added). The Center is covered under this definition as previously set out in this Complaint.
- 34. The State of Texas, Texas Accessibility Standards (the "TAS") of the Architectural Barriers Act, Article 9102, Texas Civil Statutes, are similar to and closely track the ADAAG. The TAS clearly sets out certain requirements for public accommodations such as the Site with regards to design requirements.
- 35. Complying with the TAS is a requirement of Chapter 469 of the Government Code. Violation of TAS is therefore a violation of Chapter 469. A violation of Chapter 469 is a violation of §121.003(d)(1) of the Tex. Hum. Res. Code. because §121.003 (d)(1) specifically states that a failure to comply with Article 9102, Texas Civil Statutes is a form of discrimination in Texas. Therefore violation of the TAS requirements is a violation of §121.003 of the Tex. Hum. Res. Code. Article 9102 was simply codified into Chapter 469 of

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- 36. Many of the architectural barriers previously set out in the "Facts" portion of this Complaint regarding the access at the Center may be violations of the TAS requirements as well as the ADAAG, including the access aisle that is right in the middle of the cart storage area at the Halal Import store.
- 37. Any public facility that violates the provisions of Section 121.003 is deemed to have deprived a person with a disability of his or her civil liberties. The person with a disability deprived of his or her civil liberties may maintain a cause of action for damages in a court of competent jurisdiction, and there is a conclusive presumption of damages in the amount of no less than \$100. Tex. Hum. Res. Code § 121.004(b). (italics added.)
- 38. As a direct and proximate result of the Defendants' violation of Texas law and their denial of appropriate and dignified access into and use of the Center, the Defendants deprived Mr. Morgan of his civil liberties. Mr. Morgan suffered inconvenience and the indignity and stigma of discrimination as a result.

### **REQUEST FOR RELIEF**

Wherefore Plaintiff respectfully requests that the Court grant the following relief:

- 39. An order directing the Defendants to make modifications to the Center to bring it into compliance with State and Federal law.
- 40. An order directing the Defendants to stop discriminating against Mr. Morgan now and in the future.
- 41. An award to Plaintiffs for his attorney's fees, including litigation expenses, and costs.
- 42. Entry of money judgment against the Defendants, awarding Mr. Morgan damages for the violation of his civil rights under Texas state law in an amount no less than the statutory

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Case 4:11-cv-00890-Y Document 1 Filed 12/27/11 Page 13 of 14 PageID 13 minimum of \$100.00 for each violation of his civil rights under state law. The exact amount

to be determined by the trier of fact.

43. An award to Plaintiff for all other relief legal and equitable which the Court deems just and proper.

Respectfully submitted December 23, 2011 by,

Mr. Palmer D. Bailey

Bar Card No. 01533400

Law Office of Palmer Bailey, A Professional Corporation

16633 Dallas Parkway, Suite 600

Addison, TX 75001

Tel. 972.588.1863

Fax. 972.588.1801

Inlight226@aol.com

**Attorney for Plaintiff** 

Plaintiff demands a trial by jury.

The JS-44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. (SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON THE REVERSE OF THE FORM.)

I. (a) PLAINTIFFS					DEFENDANTS			
	David Morgan				Pioneer Parkway, Group, Inc.	Ltd. Ginco Investments Comp	pany, and Hho United	
(b)	(b) County of Residence of First Listed Plaintiff Tarrant				County of Residen	County of Residence of First Listed Defendant		
	(EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES)				(IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES ONLY)  NOTE: IN LAND CONDEMNATION CASES, USE THE LOCATION OF THE LAND INVOLVED.			
(c) Attorney's (Firm Name, Address, and Telephone Number)					Attorneys (If Known)			
Law Office of Palmer Bailey, p.c. Attn: Palmer Bailey								
16633 DALLAS PKWY STE. 600 Addison, TX 75001								
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		☐ 360 Other Personal Injury	Product Liability		Act 720 Labor/Mgmt. Relations	□B62 Black Lung (923) □B63 DIWC/DIWW (405(g))	893 Environmental Matters 894 Energy Allocation Act	
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V. ORIGIN (PLACE AN "X" IN ONE BOX ONLY)  Transferred from Appeal to District								
X 1 Original								
VI. CAUSE OF ACTION (Cite the U.S. Civil Statute under which you are filing and write brief statement of cause.  Do not cite jurisdictional statutes unless diversity.)								
Complaint for discrimination under the ADA for accommodations 42 U.S.C. 12101 et.seq								
VII. REQUESTED IN CHECK IF THIS IS A CLASS ACTION DEMAND \$ CHECK YES only if demanded in complaint:  COMPLAINT: UNDER F.R.C.P. 23  JURY DEMAND: x Yes No								
VIII. RELATED CASE(S) (See instructions):  IF ANY  JUDGE  DOCKET NUMBER								
DATE SIGNATURE OF ATTORNEY OF RECORD								
FOR OFFICE USE ONLY  FULL OUT 92   921   9								
RECEIPT TWO1593 AMOUNT 350 APPLAING IEB JUDGE MAG, JUDGE								